

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL POSS DUPE

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44

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 RSR-01 IO-12 /093 W
----- 028197

R 101445 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8052

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2859

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IS

SUBJECT: KATCHALSKI ELECTED PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL

REF: TEL AVIV 2257 AND A-89

1. EPHRAIM KATCHALSKI, DISTINGUISEHED ISRAELI SCIENTIST, WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL APRIL 10. KATCHALSKI WAS LABOR ALIGNMENT CANDIDATE, AND ONLY OTHER CANDIDATE WAS HEBREW UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR EPHRAIM URBACH, NOMINATED BY GAHAL AND NRP. IN SIMULTANEOUS SECRET BALLOTING KATCHALSKI RECEIVED 66 VOTES AND URBACH 41, WITH NINE ABSTAINING, ONE MEMBER NOT VOTING AND THREE MEMBERS ABSENT. (TOTAL KNESSET MEMBERSHIP IS 120 .) KATCHALSKI WILL TAKE OFFICE MAY 24 AND BEFORE THAT TIME WILL CHANGE NAME TO KATZIR, HEBREW NAME ADOPTED BY HIS LATE BROTHER.

2. KATCHALSKI RECEIVED MARGIN OF ONLY FIVE VOTES OVER NECESSARY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF 61. HOWEVER, THIS BALLOTING REFLECTS TOTAL UNITY OF LABOR PARTY' S FACTIONS BEHIND KATCHSLSKI, INDICATING THAT POTENTIALLY BITTER RIFT OVER RAFI FACTION' S EARLIER SUPPORT OF DEPUTY SPEAKER YITZHAK NAVON HAS BEEN HEALED AND THAT KATCHALSKI IS ENTERING PRESIDENCY ON SOLID POLITICAL FOUNDATION. AS EMBASSY PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, KATCHALSKI OVER THE YEARS HAS SHOWN HIMSELF TO BE A GOOD FRIEND OF EMBASSY AND OF US.

ZURHELLEN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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